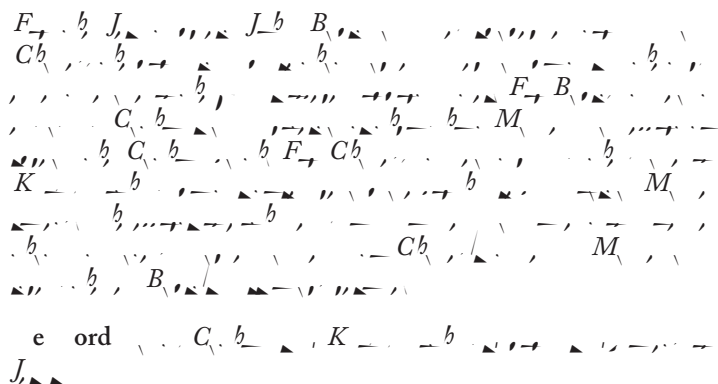


“To Destroy Popery and Everything Appertinent Thereto”: William Chaney, the Jesuit John Bapst, and the Know-Nothings in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Maine

DAVID DZUREC*



In July 1854, the selectmen of Ellsworth, Maine, called for a town meeting to denounce a spate of anti-Catholic violence in the lumbering and ship-building town. When the citizens gathered on July 8 at the Congregational Church, those responsible for much of the recent violence packed the meeting, dashing the peace-seeking hopes of the Ellsworth officials. The members of the “Cast Iron Band,” a branch of the larger anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic Know-Nothing movement, proceeded to take control of the agenda and vote out the sitting Democratic majority replacing them with members of their own number. Once in power the newly

battlegrounds in these reform efforts with the passage of the “Maine Law,” which enacted a strict regulation of alcohol and became a model for other states throughout the nation. By the time of the state elections in 1853, the reform impulse had only grown in strength with candidates and voters open to new ideas and embracing a variety of anti-partisan and reform movements.⁴

It was in this unsettled political environment that both John Bapst, S.J., and William H. Chaney found ready-made constituencies for their individual messages of reform. In both cases, the two men possessed a seemingly intuitive understanding of the populist element of the national mood which they aided in their reform efforts. Despite the similarities in their approach the ultimate aims of both men were diametrically opposed. For Bapst, the unsettled nature of mid-nineteenth-century America provided the ideal moment to win converts while strengthening the faith of existing Catholics. For Chaney, the Know-Nothing movement provided a home that he had lacked for much of his life and provided a lifelong outsider with access to the heart of the community. The collision of Bapst’s and Chaney’s strains of populism, culminating with the attack on Bapst, reveals the depth of the anxiety induced by the turmoil facing the United States during this period. Yet, for as much as the tarring and feathering of the Jesuit missionary offers insight into the depth of American anxiety in the mid-nineteenth century, the response of Bangor’s Protestant population is as instructive as the attack itself. The denunciation of what many came to call the “outrage at Ellsworth” demonstrates the limits of Chaney and the Know-Nothings’s brand of intolerance. Ultimately Bapst’s efforts

4. On the loss of the founding generation, see Alfred Young, *The American Revolution and the Origins of the Constitution* (Boston, 1999), pp. 180–81; and Simon Burrows, *The American Revolution and the Origins of the Constitution* (New York, 2008), pp. 229–37. On immigration and nativism, see W. J. Rorabaugh, *The American Revolution and the Origins of the Constitution* (New York, 1979); Katie Oxx, *The American Revolution and the Origins of the Constitution* [Critical Moments in American History], (New York, 2013) pp. 15–31; Anbinder, *The American Revolution and the Origins of the Constitution*, pp. 3–10; John T. McGreevy, *The American Revolution and the Origins of the Constitution* (Princeton, 2015), pp. 20–25; Mark Voss-Hubbard, *The American Revolution and the Origins of the Constitution* (Baltimore, 2002), pp. 107–08; Scott See, “Variations on a Borderlands Theme: Nativism and Collective Violence in Northeastern North America in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” in *The American Revolution and the Origins of the Constitution*.

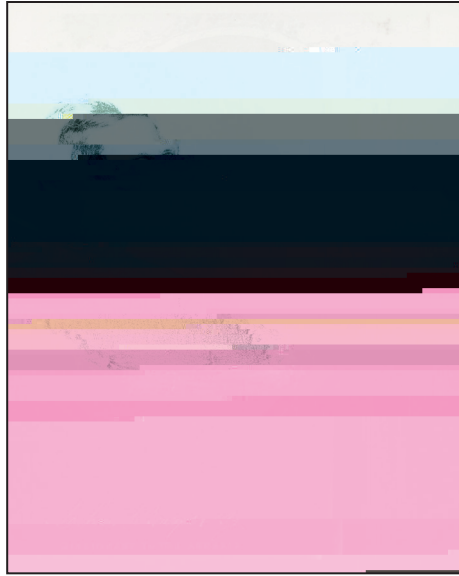


FIGURE 1. Image of John Bapst, S.J., n.d. Boston College Faculty and Staff Photographs, 1872–2012, Box 1, Folder 23, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, no. BC.2000.005ref15028.

to reform American society would continue long after Chaney and the Know-Nothings had been denounced by their one-time supporters.⁵

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The Swiss-born Bapst entered the Jesuit order in 1835 and was ordained in December 1846. Following the Sonderbund War, a civil war between the Catholic and Protestant cantons, Bapst fled Switzerland for France. In spring 1848, shortly after arriving in France, Bapst and many of his exiled Swiss colleagues received orders to travel to the American missions. Bapst made his way to New York before arriving at his assigned post

5. For a comparison between American and European religious intolerance, see McGreevy, *The Catholic Church and American Secularism*, pp. 21–25. McGreevy argues that, despite the United States' higher level of tolerance than many European countries, the anti-Catholic climate of the nineteenth century convinced Catholics of the need to develop a distinct Catholic subculture in the United States. For a discussion regarding American secularism in the wake of World War II, see McGreevy, pp. 211–13. It is argued here that Bapst's engagement with American secularism and his efforts at reform only grew stronger as time passed rather than retreated into a distinctly Catholic subculture.

in Old Town, Maine, to minister to the Penobscot Indians. Faced with a variety of challenges, including a complete lack of training in either English or Abnaki (the Penobscot language), Bapst adapted quickly during his first years in Maine. With the help of a French-speaking Penobscot woman, Bapst developed a basic knowledge of Abnaki and within months of his arrival had learned enough Abnaki to minister to the people of Old Town. With his new skills, he was soon hearing confessions, working to establish a temperance society, and acting to facilitate a settlement between rival factions within the tribe.⁶

After three years in Old Town, Bapst relocated to Eastport, Maine, to minister to the established French Canadian and growing Irish immigrant populations in the region. Joined in his efforts by two other Jesuits, John Force (Voors) and Hippolyte De Neckere, Bapst and his confreres faced a daunting geographic challenge. Their territory spanned hundreds of miles from Eastport to Waterville and encompassed the parishes of eight churches and thirty-three chapels—some 9000 Catholics—and included the Passamaquoddy people at nearby Pleasant Point. In 1852 alone, Bapst performed 110 baptisms and officiated at twenty marriages. Bapst's travels were nearly constant—answering sick calls, making financial appeals to aid in the construction of churches, giving instruction to those seeking to convert, overseeing Sunday schools, and founding temperance societies throughout the state.⁷

Despite the challenges of his assignment, Bapst met with a great deal of success. As a result of his temperance efforts, local Protestant officials in Waterville and Skowhegan, citing a downturn in alcohol consumption in their communities, repeatedly asked the Jesuit to establish permanent residence in their towns. Bapst noted that “the Protestant magistrates themselves . . . reward me with great favor and are making every possible effort to effect my permanent residence in their midst.” Included in the proffered invitations was generous aid from “many of the most distinguished” Protestants in the Waterville region and support for the construction of a Catholic church. Bapst was convinced that, with a better command of the English language, he would be able to “dispel the rest of their prejudices, to awaken their slumbering consciences and to effect, perhaps, a veritable

6. McGreevy, *„ J. . . ½ →*, pp. 28–32; Raymond Schroth, *½ „ J. . . H →* (New York, 2007) and Anatole Baillargeon, “Father John Bapst and the Know-Nothing Movement in Maine” (M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1950), pp. 27–31.

7. Baillargeon, “Father John Bapst and the Know-Nothing Movement in Maine,” pp. 36–38.

religious revolution." All of this was facilitated, Bapst wrote to a friend in Europe, by "the bright side of American liberty." He believed that "I could preach the doctrines of the Catholic religion in the most Protestant town, before an audience entirely of Protestants, and I feel sure that I would not suffer a single interruption." Buoyed by these successes, Bapst eventually turned his attention to Ellsworth.⁸

Because of the town's central location among nearly a dozen Catholic missions in the state, Bapst wrote to his Provincial Charles Stonestreet, S.J., in September 1852 calling for a "good preacher who speaks good English and who is above all a virtuous man," to be stationed at Ellsworth to establish an additional mission.⁹ The Provincial acceded and in January 1853, Bapst took up residence in Ellsworth. Bapst's reputation likely preceded him to Ellsworth as one of the local newspapers, the *Ellsworth Freeman*, noted his arrival and declared, "We are glad to give Mr. B. a good welcome as we doubt not his labors will result in much good to the flock of his charge and be a great moral benefit to the village."¹⁰ The Jesuit rented a small house at the edge of town and began his work. Bapst's arrival coincided with a period of growth for Ellsworth's Catholic population, which had long since outgrown the small building that had served as their site of worship and had already begun preparation for the construction of a new church. One of Bapst's first tasks in his new town was to help oversee the construction of the new church to house their expanding population. In the earliest days of Bapst's tenure in Ellsworth, there was no reason to expect that the success he had experienced in Waterville and Skowhegan would not be replicated in Ellsworth. The warm welcome for the Jesuit missionary would, however, be short-lived—with tensions over the version of the Bible that was to be used in the Ellsworth public schools drawing the community into a con-

following the death of his father in 1830 in a sledding accident. At age nine, Chaney bounced between the homes of several different relatives and neighbors, developing a reputation as a surly and combative child. At age sixteen, Chaney set out on his own, finding work on a fishing schooner in Penobscot and Frenchman Bays. After two years aboard the fishing vessel, Chaney enlisted in the navy but, in July 1840, deserted the receiving ship, *Cass*, in Boston Harbor after only nine months of service. Following his desertion, Chaney lit out for the American West. He envisioned himself as a "refugee, a price set on my head, every man's hand against me." Although initially intending to head for New Orleans, Chaney made it as far as Ohio before falling ill and finding himself without options: "I counted my money—\$1.27; had no baggage—not even a spare shirt; sick and in a strange land; not yet twenty years old—really my prospects looked gloomy."¹²

The people of Sciota Furnace, Ohio, came to Chaney's aid, nursing him back to health and helping him to obtain a teaching position in Porter Township in early 1841. In the wake of this kindness, Chaney reimagined his future and gave over his life as a refugee to a life of self-improvement. He spent the next few months scraping by, often "boarding around" with the families of his students, before meeting rich Virginian Ephraim Pollock, who recommended Chaney to Morgan Nelson, a wealthy lawyer and city councilor in Wheeling. Based on Pollock's recommendation, Nelson took Chaney in and offered him room and board while he read law under Nelson's guidance. In addition to his studies, Chaney was an active member of his new community, writing poems and essays for the *Wheeling Register*, and taking an interest in Whig politics.¹³

After he completed his studies and was admitted to the bar, Chaney moved to Burlington, Iowa, in September 1846. After a rocky start that involved his mishandling of several criminal cases my

council appointed him city solicitor the following spring. In July 1851 Chaney married a local woman, Jane McGeary. For the briefest of moments, it seemed as though Chaney had finally found a place for himself in the world; however, it was not to last.

Within only a matter of months, Chaney's life again seemed to come apart. At the end of September, his wife fell ill. Within a matter of days, she died, mostly likely of cholera. Only a month later, following a failed defense of the city in a civil suit, the city council removed Chaney from his office as solicitor. His world crumbling, Chaney left Iowa to return to Maine where he responded to an advertisement by Charles Lowell of Ellsworth, who was looking for a law associate. The partnership of Lowell and Chaney began officially on May 1, 1852, but was unstable from the start. Professionally, Chaney disdained legal precedent and the profession as a whole, and his courtroom manner led Judge J. W. Hathaway to interrupt Chaney during an argument to a jury, noting, "it is a filthy bird that fouls its own nest." The partnership dissolved after only five months, with each man deciding to pursue an independent career.¹⁴

Although Chaney continued to practice law after the fall of the partnership, his legal training had been unsystematic and largely self-directed, and he had never developed a sense of professional etiquette. Rather than work within the existing system, Chaney sought to find ways to reform the legal system. He declared the grand jury to be a "humbug" relic of medieval ignorance and argued that irresponsible prosecutors, jurors, and witnesses could destroy even an innocent person's reputation. Not surprisingly, Chaney's practice foundered, and he was forced to take up employ as a lumber store clerk, "weighing out pork, drawing molasses, and trimming [sic] greasy lamps."¹⁵

While he took up menial work to make ends meet, Chaney—like his period in Ohio and Iowa—continued to pursue the life of the mind. He published stories in Maine and Massachusetts newspapers, regularly attended dramatic shows and lectures, and helped organize the Ellsworth Debating Club (for which he was elected secretary). Employing the connections made in these intellectual pursuits, Chaney applied for and was hired to teach in the Ellsworth school district during summer 1853. By all

were impressed by his teaching and the students' efforts. Despite this success, a new opportunity in journalism enticed Chaney to make yet another career change, as Elijah Couillard, publisher of the *Essex Herald*, approached Chaney about filling an upcoming editorial position at the

Although Chaney's editorial replacement was announced publicly as George S. Raymond, the new editor informed his associates that his real name was "Don Carlos R. Kearney," that he was the son of a commodore in the United States Navy, and that he had been a revolutionary in South

converted to Catholicism. These conversions proved unsettling to a number of local Protestant ministers, who denounced Bapst from their pulpits, warning him to stop his work of proselytizing and “of reducing free-born Americans to Rome’s galling yoke.” Simultaneously, Bapst’s successful proselytization efforts and his work in helping to build the new church in Ellsworth emboldened the Catholic population to take a stand against policies traditionally accepted by them, such as the use of the King James Bible in public schools, which laid the foundation for the nativist, anti-Catholic explosion that was to follow.²²

Prior to 1853, all of Ellsworth’s public school students had made use of the Protestant King James Bible in their class work. On the eve of the new school year, in the late summer of 1853, Bapst actively encouraged

In all cases, the cause of public funding for parochial schools and the right of non-Protestants to refuse the use of the King James Bible proved to be a losing one. In *Dunfee v. The Trustees of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, the Maine Supreme Court ruled in favor of the defendant, refusing to "subordinate the state to the individual conscience." Furthermore, writing for the court, Chief Justice John Appleton noted that "if the common version of the Bible is to be objected because of denominational objections, so might the works of Locke, Bacon, Newton and Galileo."²⁵ The precedent set in the Donahoe case, declaring that a student might be expelled for refusing to read a text regardless of a student's religious views, would be in effect until 1890, when the *Elliott* case in

As the Donahoe case made its way through the courts, the members of the Ellsworth School Committee placed blame for the entire incident on "Mr. Bapst." The committee members declared that the Jesuit was "responsible for the agitation of this subject, and all of the evil that has resulted." Prior to the arrival of "the Rev. Mr. Bapst, a Catholic priest, of the order of the Jesuits," they argued, "all was undisturbed harmony on this subject." Worse still, they contended,

an extended statement by the superintendent of public instruction in New York, who declared that no child should be forced to read a particular version of the Bible in school.²⁹ In a November editorial Chaney went so far as to urge calm from all sides, noting that "the discussion of any sectarian question, through the columns of a newspaper, never yet did any good, but in our opinion has always resulted in evil." He hoped that "like a little fire," the controversy "may be easily extinguished if taken in time, but if left to itself will soon kindle into a devouring flame."³⁰ These early calls for restraint, however, were soon replaced by a far more vitriolic tone as violence erupted on both sides of the controversy.

Within days of Chaney's call for calm, someone broke into a schoolhouse on the western side of town and destroyed fourteen King James Bibles. This act of vandalism was followed by name calling and threats of violence by Catholics against members of the Ellsworth School Committee. In the face of this Catholic violence, Chaney changed his tone, declaring the "Catholic Bible Question" part of an elaborate Roman Catholic conspiracy to undermine the American republic. The School Committee defended its actions and placed blame for the Catholic violence on Bapst in a letter to the *Baltimore Daily*. The Jesuit was quick to respond to the newspaper attacks, counseling patience and declaring that the charges leveled against him were entirely false.³¹

The Jesuit's response, however, only seemed to agitate Chaney further. The editor of the *Herald* would later admit that "when angered . . . my voice is loud and harsh my features become rigid, my little eyes set and seem to glow with the fierceness of a demon more than a human." Furthermore, Chaney declared, "I hold that a compromise implies a surrender of something that should be retained." Within a matter of weeks, an issue that Chaney had argued should remain out of the columns of a newspaper had become a personal crusade splashed across the pages of his publication.³²

In addition to his concern for the future of the Republic, Chaney's change of heart may have resulted in part from financial concerns. The

29. For Chaney's coverage of the controversy, see *Elliott's Herald*, December 9, 1853, 1; December 23, 1853, 1.

30. *Elliott's Herald*, November 11, 1853, 1.

31. Chaney's editorial appears in the *Elliott's Herald* of December 9, 1853, January 6, 1854, and January 13, 1854. The school committee's letter is published in the *Baltimore Daily* [ME] December 13, 1853.

E..., *F...* noted that, during its initial restraint in covering the Bible controversy, the *H...* was losing nativist subscribers at a rate of six to fourteen per day. The editors at the *F...* surmised that this decline had played a key role in the development of Chaney's anti-Catholic position, chiding, "Friend Chaney, you are not the first zealot that love of filthy lucre has made."³³ Yet, if increasing circulation was a factor Chaney's efforts, it was only a part of the Chaney's growing zealotry, as his efforts extended well beyond the pages of the *H...*

Beginning in late January 1854, Chaney organized a series of mass gatherings at Lord's Hall in Ellsworth to discuss the Catholic threat. At one meeting, following a series of anti-Catholic speeches given by a number of prominent members of Ellsworth society (including Chaney; Dr. Moses Pulsifer; the minister J. French; and J. S. Hawes, the principal of Ellsworth's high school), the group declared its intent to "destroy popery and everything appertinent thereto" and adopted the name the "Cast Iron Band."³⁴ Chaney's efforts did not end with the creation of the Band. In the weeks that followed the organization of the anti-Catholic nativist group, Chaney traveled throughout the neighboring villages of Hancock, Reed's Brook, Morgan's Bay, Blue Hill, Southwest Harbor, Surry, and Gouldsboro, speaking on behalf of the growing nativist forces gathering supporters throughout Hancock County. In the Know-Nothing movement Chaney finally seemed to have found his place.³⁵

Throughout spring 1854 Chaney's editorial efforts mirrored those of his public speaking engagements. Presenting issue after issue, Chaney railed against the Catholic threat. Employing thinly veiled satire, political cartoons, and outright attacks, Chaney decried the efforts of Bapst and the "Jack Catholics"—his label for those who supported the Jesuit, including newspapers that appeared sympathetic to Bapst's cause such as the *B...*, *M...*, and the *E...*. By April, Chaney went so far as to publish a notice declaring that "1000 men [were] wanted" and issuing a call to "Protestant laborers everywhere" to "come to Ellsworth, and come quickly! for your services may yet be needed in more ways than one."³⁶

for a "1000 men" came as members of the Cast Iron Band marched through town taunting and threatening Catholics. Catholic women who worked in Protestant households daily were ridiculed and heard their employers mocking the Catholic fish-and-egg diets on Fridays and slandering Bapst. For their part, Catholics cursed Chaney in the streets, and Irish women asked God to save them from the "devil Chaney."³⁷

Before long, the tension simmering in Ellsworth and environs boiled over into outright violence. In mid-April, a rumor spread throughout Ellsworth that a group of Catholics had resolved to "blot out" Chaney and his press. When the attack on the *Herald* did come, Chaney and members of the Cast Iron Band, who had been keeping watch over the press as the rumors grew, defended the newspaper building and surprised the would-be Catholic vandals. A month later, Chaney was confronted by a fist-shaking Irish-Catholic named Tim Doyle who threatened to knock Chaney's teeth down his throat. The two men squared off, and Chaney beat Doyle until spectators managed to pull the editor away. By June, Bapst became the target of Cast Iron Band violence. Initially, the mob had hoped to seize Bapst in an attack on his home on June 3. When his housekeeper informed the members of the Band that the priest was away on a sick-call, they expressed their disappointment by shattering a window with a large stone. Three days later, the mob again returned, and unaware that Bapst had returned to Ellsworth, focused its anger on the town's new church, shattering every window in the building. Following this wave of violence, the bishop, fearing for Bapst's safety, reassigned the Jesuit to Bangor and ordered that he not return to the town even for Sunday Masses.³⁸

In the wake of Bapst's departure, the *Ellsworth Herald* offered a review of the recent "excitement." Authored by Lowell, Chaney's former law partner, the review was as much a revival of the two men's long-running feud as it was a condemnation of the recent violence. Lowell declared that "there is no more firm and decided Protestant in America, nor an individual with less sympathy with the Catholic Faith, than the humble writer of this review." Lowell added, however, that "any religion is better than none at all," and he therefore "wishes every person to worship God according to his own con-

37. Mary A. Tincker, *A History of the State of Maine* (New York, 1872), pp. 128–29, Whitmore, "Portrait of a Maine 'Know-Nothing,'" pp. 39–40.

38. *Ellsworth Herald*, May 26, 1854, 1; *Ellsworth Herald*, May 26, 1854, p. 1; "Fr. Bapst's Narrative," *Ellsworth Herald*, 18 (1889), pp. 133–36; McGreevy, *The Know-Nothing Movement in Maine*, p. 26; Baillargeon, "Father John Bapst and the Know-Nothing Movement in Maine," pp. 55–56.

victions of right and duty." It was in this framework that Lowell offered his "review." In examining the root cause of the controversy, Lowell blamed a "sectarian spirit" and the "indiscrete language and temper" of leading Catholic officials; however, after the initial unsettlement, he argued that the controversy had "since been kept alive, extended, and greatly aggravated . . . by William H. Chaney." According to Lowell, Chaney's attacks had "kept up and aggravated the situation." His "prostituted press, a weak brain, and perverse spirit, have been able to impose on so many well-meaning citizens, and to excite and inflame the masses." Although Lowell certainly held a personal grudge against Chaney, his sentiments reflected the view of Ellsworth's non-nativist Protestant population.³⁹

Far from bringing an end to the Cast Iron Band's activities in Ellsworth, Bapst's departure was viewed as a victory by the nativist group, sparking further violence. The activities of anti-Catholic mobs only increased in the ensuing period, with Catholics fearing to leave their homes after dark. On the night of June 13, members of the Cast Iron Band detonated a bomb on the steps of the old Catholic chapel that served as the home for the Catholic school, blowing the door from its hinges and shattering every window in the structure. This spate of increased violence drew the condemnation of many town residents, including Lowell, and the town selectmen called a meeting for July 8 at which they planned to denounce the Cast Iron Band and its supporters. Instead, the emboldened nativist band seized control of the town meeting, elected new selectmen, and passed a resolution offering Bapst

an entire suit of new clothes such as cannot be found at the shops of any Tailor; and that when thus appareled, he be presented with a free ticket to leave Ellsworth upon the first, . . . that may go into effect.

Within a month of the Jesuit's relocation, the Cast Iron Band had reached the height of its power.⁴⁰

The following week, someone set fire to the new church, which, according to the *E. F.*, "if not timely discovered might have proved the destruction of that building and the adjoining Catholic School." Although the nativist impulse seemed to have a firm grasp on Ellsworth and the surrounding communities, there was a growing regional backlash against the violence. The . . . denounced the attack on the church, blaming Chaney for much of the violence and declaring that the attack was

the "fruit of a bitter campaign waged for months by the *Ellsworth Standard*." The *Bangor Morning Star* echoed these sentiments, declaring that "we cannot believe that the numerous outrages in Ellsworth against the Irish Catholic population are countenanced by the people." Like their counterparts in Augusta, the editors of the *Morning Star* criticized the "bitter crusade which the *Ellsworth Standard* has waged for many months." Whatever the cause, the Bangor paper declared, Ellsworth stands "disgraced in the eyes of all good citizens," particularly because the acts of violence violated the religious freedom that "is carefully protected by the constitution under which we live, and which protection has ever been regarded as the dearest right of the citizens." All of these assertions served as prelude to the peak of both the violence in Ellsworth and the backlash against it in fall 1854.⁴¹

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In early October 1854, Bapst was called to Cherryfield, fifty miles southeast of Bangor. Believing the nativist furor in Ellsworth to have run its course, Bapst decided to spend the night in Ellsworth (which was halfway to Cherryfield). On the evening of October 14, word spread throughout Ellsworth that the Jesuit had returned. This news elicited an immediate reaction. Local nativist leaders called a special meeting of the Cast Iron Band, while dozens of men and boys assembled in the Post Office Square. Shortly after 9:00 that evening, members of the Band donned masks, met in Post Office Square, and led the crowd through a driving rain to the Kent home where Bapst was hearing confession. Accounts vary as to what happened next. Some said that Bapst was dragged from the house by the mob; others stated that the Jesuit came of his own volition to protect the residents of the home. Either way, at long last the Cast Iron Band could make good on its selectmen's threat.

Although the mob initially debated how best to proceed, it eventually decided to follow through on the threat issued in the town meeting. Bapst was stripped of his clothes, robbed of his wallet and watch, tarred, and feathered him, with the group swearing at him. According to a Bangor newspaper, one mob member jeered, "why don't you call on your Virgin Mary for help?" Bapst then was placed on a sharp rail, carried for half a mile to the Tisdale shipyard, tossed unconscious upon the wharf. At that point, despite some calls to hang the priest, the leader of the mob called an end to the attack. A group of heavily armed Catholics who had been

41. *Ellsworth Standard*, cited in Baillargeon, "Father John Bapst and the Know-Nothing Movement in Maine," p. 58; *Bangor Morning Star*, [ME], EaabpaoCp oCp Tj/ Tf1.4 0 TD.0535jT* and

searching for Bapst since the attack rescued him, carrying him back to the Kent home. The next morning, Bapst insisted on celebrating Mass for his former parishioners before he was taken to Bangor to recover. He never

Influence." Despite an initial reticence, Chaney, in taking up the nativist cause, had made himself a pillar of the Ellsworth community.⁴⁶

Yet as the nativist wave in Maine crested and retreated, so, too, did Chaney's place in Ellsworth society. As the new Republican Party began to draw away members of the Know-Nothings, Chaney denounced those who fled the party, declaring,

when we left the old Democratic Party it was not to return again, like a dog to his vomit, nor was it to go into the arms of the dying Whig Party, but it was to help build up a new party and adhere to it.

Those who "profess friendship with the self-styled Republican party . . . are committing adultery with the deformed nondescript."⁴⁷ Chaney's cries for loyalty went unheeded, and he began to look elsewhere for opportunities as he realized he was fighting a lost cause. Only twelve months after purchasing and renaming the *Ellsworth Standard*, Chaney left for New Bedford, Massachusetts, in December 1855, abandoning his second wife and two sons. Faced with the political adultery of Ellsworth partisans, Chaney hoped to find nativist sympathizers in Massachusetts. In February 1856, he established the Know-Nothing *Ellsworth Standard*. As in Maine, however, the diminished nativist impulse left Chaney without much of an audience for his new endeavor, and Chaney, without any expression of embarrassment, abandoned the American Party. In a presidential election year, Chaney—keenly aware of the shifting political winds—renamed his paper the *Ellsworth Standard* and endorsed James Buchanan and the Democratic Party.⁴⁸

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The anti-Catholic violence in Ellsworth was not unique. Just days before the attack on Bapst, about 100 miles south of Ellsworth, the "Old South Church" in Bath, Maine, had been destroyed as the result of a series of nativist, anti-Catholic sermons delivered by John Orr, an itinerant preacher who went by the name of the Angel Gabriel. In the months that followed the attack on Bapst, scattered outbreaks of such violence occurred in places like Manchester, New Hampshire; Dorchester, Massachusetts; and Louisville, Kentucky. In Louisville on August 6, 1855,

46. *Ellsworth Standard*, October 20, p. 1; October 27, p. 1; November 3, p. 1; and December 28, 1855, p. 1; *Ellsworth Standard* [ME], January 12, 1855, p. 1.

47. Cited in Herbert Silsby, "Looking Backward," *Ellsworth Standard*, August 22, 1996, 20.

48. Whitmore, "Portrait of a Maine 'Know-Nothing,'" pp. 44–45.

Know-Nothings inspired by nativist editorials in the *Ellsworth Journal* set fire to blocks of dwellings tenanted by the Irish, with entire families being roasted to death or shot as they attempted to escape. Even in Ellsworth, the final act of anti-Catholic violence occurred on April 27, 1856, with the destruction of the Catholic Church that Bapst had helped to construct three years prior.⁴⁹

Yet, the attack on Bapst was in many ways the denouement of the vitriolic strain of Know-Nothingism that Chaney had fostered in Ellsworth and Hancock County as a whole. The public interplay between Bapst and Chaney, the Donahoe court case, the rise of the Cast Iron Band (most notably its takeover of the Ellsworth town government), and the brutality of the tarring and feathering of the Jesuit generated a great deal of public attention to Chaney's role in the destruction of the Catholic Church. Yet, it would "be bru-

This political shift ranged from the partisan to the personal as members of Ellsworth's newly formed Republican Party—many of whom had been Know-Nothings—sought to distance themselves from the anti-Catholic violence that had gripped Ellsworth. In attempting to assign

new college in Jersey City, New Jersey. "Conditions there," Bapst declared, "will soon make it one of the most important cities in the union." A college "situated in the central part of the city and easily accessible" could serve the growing immigrant population. Despite the many challenges facing the Jesuits in America, Bapst continued to recognize the opportunities available to the Jesuits in the United States and the level of engagement required to realize those opportunities. By 1879, Bapst's mental and physical health was failing, and he left his post. He ultimately resided at Mount Hope Retreat near Baltimore where he died in 1887.⁵⁵

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For both Bapst and Chaney, the populist impulse that marked American politics in the turbulent decade of the 1850s proved a moment of opportunity. Each man worked in his own way to take advantage of this climate. For Bapst, it meant engaging Catholics and Protestants throughout Maine in an effort to spread the Catholic faith. For Chaney, it meant riding the wave of Know-Nothing politics in an effort to secure a place for himself in coastal Maine society. The efforts of both men ultimately became entangled in local and national politics. At the peak of their entanglement, cure a kd serve t5st ervice t5st ervice t5stwoearhsrg fiily a marked At tr4 T,T*.ol.0ar portuniinimace ly r*.ol.r